



THE JOURNEY TO SELF-RELIANCE

TRANSFORMATION AT USAID

WHAT IS SELF-RELIANCE?

To end the need for foreign assistance, we must focus on building self-reliance — defined as the ability of a country, including the government, civil society, and the private sector — to plan, finance, and implement solutions to solve its own development challenges. This approach must be the cornerstone for how we orient USAID country partnerships.

THEORY OF CHANGE

SELF-RELIANCE IS DRIVEN BY TWO CLOSELY RELATED ELEMENTS: COMMITMENT AND CAPACITY

COMMITMENT:

- How well a country’s laws, policies, actions, and informal governance mechanisms — such as cultures and norms — support progress toward self-reliance.

CAPACITY:

- How far the country has come in its journey across the dimensions of political, social, and economic development, including the ability to work across these sectors.

For USAID this means that, as a country’s commitment and capacity to plan, finance, and implement solutions to solve its own development challenges strengthens, our partnership should also evolve — ensuring that the programs we implement are best-supporting a country’s journey to self-reliance.

SELF-RELIANCE METRICS

USAID has identified a set of third-party, publicly available, high-level metrics which we feel best capture the concepts of “commitment” and “capacity” — and therefore, self-reliance.

These metrics will help USAID understand where each country is on the journey to self-reliance so that we can better tailor our partnerships according to each country's self-reliance needs.

 COMMITMENT METRICS CHOICES/BEHAVIORS	 CAPACITY METRICS ACHIEVEMENT/OUTCOMES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Open and Accountable Governance Liberal Democracy Index (V-Dem) Open Government (WJP) 2. Inclusive Development Social Group Equality (V-Dem) Economic Gender Gap (WEF) 3. Economic Policy Business Environment (Legatum) Trade Freedom (Heritage) Biodiversity and Habitat Protection (Yale/CIESIN) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capacity of the Government Government Effectiveness (WGI) Efficiency of Tax Administration (IPD) Safety and Security (Legatum) 2. Capacity of Civil Society Diagonal Accountability Index (V-Dem) 3. Capacity of Citizens Poverty Rate (World Bank) Education Quality (World Bank) Child Health (CIESIN) 4. Capacity of the Economy Per Capita GDP in PPP (World Bank) Export Concentration Index (UNCTAD) ICT Use (WEF)



COUNTRY ROADMAPS

The self-reliance metrics have been used to create Country Roadmaps — USAID’s visualization tool for analyzing performance on each of the 17 self-reliance metrics, and assessing a country’s overall progress on the Journey to Self-Reliance.

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- The Country Roadmaps will be produced annually for all low- and middle-income countries, and are available by visiting selfreliance.usaid.gov

HOW WILL WE USE THE SELF-RELIANCE METRICS AND COUNTRY ROADMAPS?

TO PLOT THE OVERALL JOURNEY

By plotting the development spectrum of the world’s low- and middle-income countries, we are able to put a stake in the ground of understanding what it means to reorient around the concept of self-reliance.

TO INFORM STRATEGIC DECISIONS

While they will not be the only tool, the metrics will be an important part of where we anchor our country strategies going forward.

FOR USE IN DEVELOPMENT DIALOGUE

The metrics allow us to see not only where a country is in its overall journey to self-reliance, but also its relative strengths and challenges.

TO SIGNAL WHEN WE MIGHT CONSIDER EXAMINATION FOR STRATEGIC TRANSITIONS

When the metrics indicate a country has achieved an advanced level of self-reliance, this will signal that we might want to examine the country for a possible conversation about strategic transition — that is, to an evolved relationship that moves beyond traditional development partnership models.